

Telling Our Story

what's up, DOC!



Minister Husn Banu Ghazanfar, Ministry of Women's Affairs, at the launch of the Inheritance and Land Rights public awareness campaign

Tip of the Week

Happy Holidays to all our friends!

We wish you all a happy and safe end to 2012... and we look forward to seeing you all in 2013!

فرارسیدن
سال نو 2013
میلادی را به
همه مبارک
میگوئیم!



Protecting Women's Inheritance Rights

Afghan women can struggle for a lifetime to inherit and retain rights to their family property after the deaths of their husbands or fathers, making them vulnerable to poverty and hunger.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs and USAID launched a national public information campaign on Dec 15, in support of Afghan women's rights to inherit and own land and property. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the extreme challenges women face when they are unable to own, access, and use land and property rightfully theirs. The campaign also seeks to provide legal education to the public, explaining that women's land rights are protected under the Constitution of Afghanistan.

"The Afghan government strongly supports legitimate claims of Afghan women on

inheritance and land rights," Minister Dr. Husn Banu Ghazanfar said.

During the 30-day campaign, 50 billboards will be displayed around the city of Kabul, while radio dramas and radio and TV public-service announcements will be broadcast nationwide.



Participants at the launch of the Inheritance and Land Rights public awareness campaign

Poetry Speaks Louder Than Words

Almost 160 Afghans recently gathered at the Ghazi Abdullah Khan High School in Spin Boldak, Kandahar, for a one-day poetry contest. Twenty-two participants recited poetry reflecting the common themes of peace, national unity and community cooperation. The winning poem, “Kandahar,” spoke nostalgically of Kandahar’s rich history and past glories.

“The poetry contest served as an opportunity for us to meet the District Governor, whom we had never met in person,” said Haji Walid, author of the winning poem. “Now that I know the District Governor, I will meet with him to discuss my community’s problems and concerns.”

Many youths in Spin Boldak, a volatile border district in Kandahar Province, feel disillusioned with the Afghan Government. The USAID-supported event provided a venue for them to share their concerns with a variety of local officials, including



Participants encouraged youth to continue their education and work with their communities to improve Afghanistan

the District Governor, the District Department of Education Director, and the District Revenue Director, and set the stage for continued dialogue. Student participants were encouraged to continue their education and to work with their communities and local government to improve Afghanistan’s future.

Afghan Youth Paint a Brighter Future

“I have made this drawing to say I want my city to be like this,” said Zahra, a sixth-grade student from Kapisa Province in eastern Afghanistan, as she proudly displayed her award-winning artwork.



Zahra, a 6th grade student in Kapisa Province, proudly displays her award-winning picture.

Zahra is one of 595 students who participated in a special art exhibition titled, “Let’s Take Care of Our Ancient City.”

“I see this event as a very effective way of encouraging citizens to take part in cleaning the city. I am a baker and I have closed my shop today to be here,” said Abdul Samad, father of a ninth-grade student.

The exhibition cultivated a sense of pride and community ownership in local youth. Students were asked to create original drawings reflecting the theme of keeping their community safe and clean. Judges chose 30 outstanding drawings and awarded each of the winners with a backpack containing school and art supplies, to encourage continued creativity.

Throughout Afghanistan, USAID is working to increase citizens’ involvement in municipal governance and community improvement. Events such as the drawing exhibition demonstrate the importance of involving children and youths in community outreach. Organizers hope these activities will encourage these future leaders of Afghanistan to care for and advocate on behalf of their communities.

Community Rebuilds Hope

A master mason and a trainee repair a canal wall in Khost province, eastern Afghanistan, as part of a project to refurbish flood-damaged irrigation infrastructure in Gurbuz district.

The USAID-supported project was designed in collaboration with Afghan government officials to benefit 2,800 families by pairing 163 unskilled villagers with master masons.

Together, they repaired nearly 2.5 km of the canal network and two reservoirs.

The project also succeeded in passing vital skills to the local community who can now maintain the canal and carry out basic repairs.

The project is important to Gurbuz, which relies on agriculture and animal husbandry, and crop yields had fallen after flooding damaged the canal.

Now, the community says it has confidence better times lie ahead.



Skilled laborers work with unskilled villagers to repair the canal network in Khost province

Photo of the Week



“We’re trying to find jobs, but it’s difficult,” says Qamarudin, a farm laborer, “but the food is helping.”

Drought resulted in significant crop reduction in parts of northern and central Afghanistan, pushing already vulnerable groups to reduce their food intake.

The World Food Program (WFP) supports more than 8,000 people through a Food-for-Work project in Faryab province. This USAID-funded activity engages local people in small-scale infrastructure projects that improve the local community, such as cleaning out water reservoirs and drainage ditches, as well as digging wells and constructing school boundary walls.